538 folklore research. The collection and preservation of Finnish folklore is an achievement any nation would be proud of, but, characteristically, very few Finns are even aware of the fact.

[536] The appearance of the Kalevala marked the birth of Finnish belles-lettres. The fates and exploits of ancient heroes proved an inspiration especially in the drama. The most successful of the dramatists was Aleksis Kivi, whose tradegy Kullervo describes the unfortunate Finnish hero in true Shakespearean spirit. At his height, however, Kivi is a realistic and humorous author. His comedy Nummisuutarit (The Cobblers on the Hearth) and his long novel Seitsemän Veljestä (The Seven Brothers) are true classics of Finnish literature, still as fresh and enjoyable as when they first appeared

533 considered "out of fashion." Jazz music is not popular in Finland except among a few university and high school students, while the common people favor a kind of "hillbilly music." However, the Finns are extremely interested in choir singing, and thus become acquainted with better vocal music.

536 545 Dramatic Arts. The interest shown by the Finns in dramatic art, if one considers the number of theaters and acting companies in proportion to the size of the population, may be adjudged very great. Actors and authors also often give public readings of poetry and prose pieces, and, as a rule, these occasions 546 are well attended. The products of the Finnish film industry are almost entirely limited to